

# NEW MASSES

ESTABLISHED 1911

## Editors

THEODORE DRAPER, GRANVILLE HICKS, CROCKETT JOHNSON,  
JOSHUA KUNITZ, A. B. MAGILL, HERMAN MICHELSON,  
BRUCE MINTON, SAMUEL SILLEN

## Contributing Editors

ROBERT FORSYTHE, JOSEPH FREEMAN, MICHAEL GOLD,  
HORACE GREGORY, ALFRED O'MALLEY, LOREN MILLER,  
ISIDOR SCHNEIDER, MARGUERITE YOUNG.

## Business and Circulation Manager

GEORGE WILLNER

## Advertising Manager

ERIC BERNAY



## Soviet Justice and Its Foes

**A** DAY after the Soviet government announced the trial of Rykov, Bukharin, Yagoda, and others charged with espionage, treason, and murder, the capitalist press broke out in an obscene campaign of slander and vile insinuations against Soviet justice. Suddenly the reactionary *Herald Tribune* began to display inordinate solicitude over the prestige of the Soviets. Even before the publication of the indictment, its editorial attempted to impugn the authenticity of the forthcoming trial, hypocritically suggesting that "to the Soviet Union's friends outside Russia it makes further explanations necessary." The Tartuffian *New York Times*, starting from the premise that Gorky favored "moderation" toward the conspirators, concludes its inane speculations with the sentence: "Against such a background of unreason the new state trial begins in Moscow." The notorious Isaac Don Levine, whose wishful anti-Soviet thinking once led him to write an absurd book about the insufficiency of the Soviet Union's natural resources for carrying out the First Five-Year Plan, immediately started a series in Hearst's *New York Journal-American* telling the "real [!] truth behind Moscow's new mass trial."

Not to be outdone by the reactionaries, a motley group of anti-Communists and liberals, knowingly or unknowingly serving as a front for the Trotskyites, also rushed into print. Ignoring the fact that the trial at Moscow will be an open trial at which the accredited correspondents of the world press, as well as representatives of all the embassies, will be present, they telegraphed to the Soviet ambassador in Washington the exceedingly modest request that the Soviet government postpone the trial for six weeks in order to enable a committee chosen by themselves to be present as observers. Without their presence, they asserted, the new "demonstration trial" would "further shake the faith of civilized mankind in Soviet justice." Why Mary Fox and Oswald Garrison Villard are supposed to speak for civilized mankind, and

such men as Lion Feuchtwanger, Martin Andersen Nexö, Marcel Cachin, the Webbs, and Romain Rolland speak for barbarism is difficult to understand. But modesty does not seem to be the most characteristic attribute of these liberals.

## Pitfalls for Prophets

**I**T is almost incomprehensible how such people refuse to learn from experience, how ready they are to give the benefit of every sickly doubt to the enemies of the Socialist Soviet Republic. We remember those who loved the Soviet Union so much that they were distressed by the sight of young workers taking military training in the streets of Moscow. Now we know from the terrible examples of China, Ethiopia, and Spain how wonderfully realistic and far-sighted the Soviets were in not heeding the criticism of the soft-headed well-wishers and in building a mighty defensive force which has kept the predatory imperialist powers from their borders.

We still remember how only a few months ago the bourgeois correspondents from Moscow wrote sneering reports about the Soviets' spy hysteria. Now with the growing experience with fascist spies in this country, and with the startling revelation that American passports were actually obtained for the purpose of smuggling German and other spies into the Soviet Union, the silly talk about spy hysteria has suddenly ceased. And what happened when the N.E.P. was introduced, when the Five-Year Plan was announced, and when collectivization of agriculture started? Almost invariably the benefit of their doubts was given to the enemies.

When the self-confessed traitor, Alexander Barmine, former Soviet attaché in Greece, announced in a series of articles in the *New York Times* that Bukharin and Rykov were shot because the Soviet government did not dare to bring them to open trial, the *Times* did not hesitate to publish this news on the front page. And now where is Mr. Barmine with his startling revelations? Only recently the American engineer, Littlepage, told in the *Saturday Evening Post* a story about the Trotskyist wreckers and saboteurs in the Soviet Union. He especially mentioned the name of Pyatakov as that of a wrecker whose anti-Soviet activities he had accidentally observed in Berlin, thus corroborating Pyatakov's confession at the trial. The reaction of certain liberals was typical. The whole Soviet system of justice, the hundreds of pages of transcribed testimony, the reports of all the correspondents and eye-witnesses were not enough to convince them. It took the testimony of one relatively obscure American engineer to make them feel somewhat—

though not wholly—relieved about Soviet justice. But then they found other reasons for worry and doubt.

## The Case of Mr. Brailsford

**T**HE classic example of a liberal jumping to hasty negative conclusions about the Soviet Union and then finding himself in a dreadfully foolish predicament is Mr. H. N. Brailsford, the English liberal correspondent for the *New Republic*. Over six months ago, shortly after the trial and execution of the Soviet generals, Mr. Brailsford published here in the *New Republic* of July 28, 1937 a heart-rending interpretation of "What Has Happened in the U.S.S.R." His argument was based on an alleged memorandum written by Joseph Stalin himself, giving the "real reasons" for the execution of the generals. In every point the "real reasons" were the polar opposites of the official reasons as given by Voroshilov. The apocryphal document was published in the *News Chronicle* and promptly denied by the Soviet Union. But the liberal Mr. Brailsford naturally refused to believe the Soviet denial. He accepted the fake memorandum and built on it his entire denunciation of Stalin, Soviet justice, and the U.S.S.R. However, there was one little hitch in the whole business. It happened that the memorandum referred to Yagoda, the former head of the G.P.U., as having been shot. This point made Mr. Brailsford a little uncomfortable, and so he put in a footnote stating that "the official statements, so far, have mentioned only his arrest. If he should later appear at a public trial, then the document is a fabrication." Well, Yagoda is now appearing at the public trial in Moscow. The document on which Mr. Brailsford based his bitterly anti-Soviet, Trotskyist article is, by his own statement, a fabrication. And where does that leave the liberal Mr. Brailsford?

## A Service to Peace

**T**HE new Soviet trials come at a grave moment in world history. Hitler in his speech to the dummy Reichstag has issued what is tantamount to a declaration of war against not only the Soviet Union, but every democratic country. He has already seized control in Austria and is preparing to do the same in Czechoslovakia. He and Mussolini have forced the resignation of Anthony Eden as a step toward new aggressions in Spain, Czechoslovakia, and elsewhere. The Japanese end of the Berlin-Rome-Tokyo axis is daily, by its undeclared war against China and its constant provocations, menacing the peace of the United States.

In this moment the Soviet Union, by strik-

ing at this nest of fascist spies within its borders, is performing a service not only to Socialism, but to the cause of world democracy and peace. Sincere liberals are those for whom democracy and peace are more than words. They will be able to judge the sincerity of the slanderers of Soviet justice by the actions of these people in this country. Among the defamers of the Soviet Union active in distorting the plain facts of the new Moscow trials are enemies and disrupters of the most progressive movements in this country. The Soviet government and its great leader Stalin deserve the thanks and support of all sincere liberals for the defense measures they are taking, of which the complete exposure of the Rykov-Yagoda-Bukharin conspiracies is an important part.

### *Washington Looks at London*

**R**EALPOLITIK triumphs over "idealism." Eden's resignation a victory for fascist diplomacy. Chamberlain saves peace of Europe. American isolationism now assured. In such phrases the press of this country chose to interpret the British cabinet crisis, to bless Chamberlain's betrayal of peace and democracy, and to dismiss as inconsequential the growing wrath of the English people. Not only did the press play down the Labor opposition and the hope of a split in the Conservative Party, it rushed to assure the United States that all Washington shared its views, that congressmen and senators were now united against the President's Chicago speech, and that concerted action against aggressors had become for us a dead issue.

The wish was father to the thought, a thought denied the most respectable fathering of facts. What congressmen and senators actually think about the present world situation is not yet apparent. What the administration thinks has been up to now sealed in secrecy. But this much may be said: Washington is profoundly disturbed, by no means unanimous in its conclusions, and for the most part loathe to go on record right now. The cabinet crisis is not considered independently of Hitler's speech to the Reichstag. And that speech threw a real war scare into the Capital. Its immediate effect is undoubtedly to roll up a big vote for the navy appropriation.

But, taken together with the resignation of Eden and the reaction to it in England, as expressed in the protest demonstrations, political rallies, and the resolution of the Labor party executive, Hitler's war-cry has caused a general reconsideration of the whole peace question. Spines of congressional advocates of concerted action have stiffened. The small bloc in the house, on whose activities

Representatives Scott and O'Connell recently reported, is going ahead with its hearings on foreign policy. Last week it gained a new member.

Unlike the capitalist press, these congressional observers have great faith in the British masses. They see the issues clarified by Eden's resignation, and remember the Hoare-Laval fiasco. They believe that the offer of United States coöperation for peaceful, economic measures against the fascist war-makers could sweep the pro-fascist national government out and save the day for peace.

There is no immediate hope that their program will prevail. But neither is there reason for despair and a "parallel" surrender such as the press seems prepared to make. On the contrary, there is every reason for keeping up the fight for peace through coöperation with democratic powers. Now, more than ever before, time is of the essence. Many senators and congressmen are wavering and confused. They will listen to the people back home, for they are sincerely seeking guidance. It is imperative that they, and the President, hear the people speak against shameful collaboration with Italy and Germany and for a democratic united front.

### *Green in the Northwest—*

**T**HE A. F. of L. executive council has recently busied itself on the political front in an attempt to split the labor vote. So far the Green forces have met with a severe defeat in Seattle and a rebuff in Pennsylvania. But they never say die in their crusade to set one group of workers against another.

In Seattle, the Green-backed political machine of Dave Beck—with its Red-baiting, anti-C.I.O. program—received third place in the municipal primaries. Their candidate, the incumbent Mayor John F. Dore, was eliminated by the combined efforts of the C.I.O., the progressive Democrats, and the many A. F. of L. unions which were disgusted with the corruption and demagoguery of the Beck-Dore alliance. The defeat left progressive Lieutenant-Governor Victor Meyers to contend the election on March 8 with the candidate of big business, Arthur B. Langlie.

The A. F. of L. council's hatred of progressivism will not allow it to be guided by defeat. The danger in Seattle is that Beck will throw his support to Langlie, who is backed by the anti-union Order of Cincinnati, organized several years ago to combat the growth of unionism on the waterfront and the spread of unionism to other industries. Though Langlie was defeated in his former attempt to become mayor just because of his reactionary backing, the A. F. of L. hierarchy evidently prefers big-business

political dominance to rule by progressives. Langlie has hedged himself behind vague statements that "Communism is not the issue of the campaign," and that he is not opposed to unionism "as such," but a candidate must be judged by his supporters. His election would put the anti-labor owners, with their threats of vigilanteism against strikers and their program of potential fascism, into political power in Seattle.

### *—And in Pennsylvania*

**B**USY though they were knifing the progressives in the Northwest, the A. F. of L. executive council found time for an attack on labor's economic and political power in Pennsylvania. Four years ago Pennsylvania labor elected Governor Earle and Senator Guffey in the first Democratic victory since the Civil War. Today, a certain section of the Democratic Party is confident that the labor vote is in the Democratic bag no matter what the party does. In consequence, the boys in the back room rejected the proposal of the progressive labor forces that Lieutenant-Governor Thomas Kennedy, secretary-treasurer of the United Mine Workers, be nominated for governor, and instead named the unknown Charles A. Jones.

It was at this moment that William Green strode into the picture. Frankly admitting his political motives, Green revoked the charter of the Pennsylvania Federation of Labor which had endorsed Kennedy. Removal of the charter was expected to split the Pennsylvania labor movement.

But organized labor is not so easily confused. Instead, the A. F. of L. rank and file and the C.I.O. set up a state Industrial Council. And despite Green's manipulations, labor remains a key political factor. By preserving unity on both the economic and political fields, labor and its allies can elect Pennsylvania's next governor and senator.

### *Federal Aid to Schools*

**M**UCH has been written and said about education and the good life. Now the federal government proposes to do something about it. President Roosevelt has transmitted to Congress a report of the Advisory Committee on Education recommending new federal grants to the states for educational purposes to total \$855,000,000 over a six-year period, beginning with the fiscal year 1939-40.

The President's message, summarizing the committee's findings, speaks of "glaring inequalities" that prevail and describes the educational service in many localities as being "below the minimum necessary for the pre-



servation of democratic institutions." The funds proposed by the committee would be used not merely for the expansion of educational facilities, but "to improve the preparation of teachers and other educational personnel."

The report, as presented in the President's message, is permeated by a spirit of clear and sober progressivism that is in sharp contrast to the reactionary proposal recently made by President James B. Conant of Harvard University for the further restriction of university enrollment. The specific recommendations of the Committee on Education coincide with many that have been made by the American Youth Congress and other progressive groups. Two of the most important of these deal with Negro education and the C.C.C. In regard to the former, the committee proposes "that the federal grants be conditioned upon joint plans providing an equitable distribution of the federal funds between Negro and white schools, without reducing the proportion of state and local funds spent on Negro schools." Concerning the C.C.C. the committee urges that it be removed from its present army control and be placed, together with the National Youth Administration, under the direction of the new National Youth Service Administration.

Another commendable feature of the re-

port is the emphasis it places on the allocation of funds where they are needed most, particularly in rural areas.

Though the *New York Times* regards these recommendations for increased federal expenditures for education as "of doubtful merit," millions of the youth of the land will undoubtedly welcome them. What is of doubtful merit is the report's proposal to grant federal funds to parochial and other non-public schools. This appears to be in violation of the principle of the separation of church and state. Other shortcomings are the inadequacy of the proposed expenditures—only \$70,000,000 in the first year—and the fact that the program is not to start for more than a year. The national legislative committee of the American Federation of Teachers, in congratulatory telegrams to President Roosevelt and Professor Floyd W. Reeves of the University of Chicago, chairman of the Advisory Committee on Education, has urged that the program of federal aid be launched immediately.

### Nazi Third Degree

THE entire American press was scooped most emphatically on the historic Schuschnigg-Hitler meeting at Berchtesgaden. That has happened before. But, for some unaccountable reason, no American correspondent in London bothered to cable the juiciest story in the whole Austrian crisis, even after it had appeared in practically all the British papers. The *Daily Tele-*

*graph*, which boasts the best pipe-line to Berlin of all the London papers, carried the most complete account of the meeting in its issue of February 15. A condensed version of the *Telegraph* story was given by the *Week* as follows:

He [Dr. Schuschnigg] was first shown into an anteroom where he was actually confronted with well-known members of the illegal Nazi party of Austria, who were turned on to tell him exactly "what they thought of him." Well-coached in their part in this "cracking process," they talked with vehemence and brutality to the helpless chancellor.

It is not hard to imagine the nervous results of such an experience.

At the next stage of the performance, it was not Hitler but four German generals who took the lead. (In fact for a part of this stage, Hitler was not even present, but was conferring with Ribbentrop in an adjoining room.) Without the slightest disguise or dissimulation, or any faint pretense of diplomatic "correctitude," the generals "put it up" to Schuschnigg as a military proposition.

They mentioned the strength of the German divisions ready to move into Austria. They referred to the Austrian army, and the slenderness of its chances of putting up the slightest resistance to invasion if Germany were "compelled" to invade as an alternative to assuming control without invasion.

Characteristically, then, the ultimatum, under direct threat of invasion, was offered not by Hitler himself but by the generals—a procedure probably without precedent in the history of pre-war or post-war relations of independent European states with one another.

Then came Hitler—hours of him. In slightly less direct language, but language equally unmistakable, he declared that unless his demands—involving control of Austria, control of Austrian iron ore for the Krupp factories—were acceded to, he "could not any longer guarantee the continued independence of Austria."

### Congressmen Take Notice

THE latest findings of the American Institute of Public Opinion poll, operated by Dr. George Gallup, are required reading for every congressman. The institute's investigators asked this question: "Which side do you sympathize with in the Spanish civil war?" Last year, in response to that question, 65 percent favored the loyalists, 35 percent the insurgents. This year, 75 percent favored the loyalists, 25 percent the insurgents. But the loyalists did less well in the second part of the survey: "Which side do you think will win in the end?" Only 46 percent expected the loyalists to win. This makes the response to the first question all the more noteworthy; it means that few favoring the loyalists did so merely because they wanted to be on the winning side. Another noteworthy thing about the poll is that the number of persons with neutral opinions or "no opinions" dropped from 66 percent last year to 52 percent today.



Artom

# F O R S Y T H E ' S P A G E

## Thoughts While Thinking

**W**HAT is distressing about foreign correspondents is their lack of completeness. Repeatedly we have read that von Ribbentrop was unpopular in England. Yes, with the *people*, but not with the people who rule England. That should have been mentioned every time his unpopularity was referred to. The stories about von Ribbentrop and Lady Cunard and the present Duchess of Windsor were quite true. It is even truer that von Ribbentrop has been a favorite in the great country houses. They happen to be "England."

WHEN von Ribbentrop was recalled as British ambassador to become German foreign secretary, he went not only with a knowledge that England would not move if Germany took Austria but with an unwritten *agreement* to that effect. Keep an eye on the facts if you live long enough to read the letters of this period.

AS AN EX-WINE SALESMAN, von Ribbentrop knows not only the British ruling class mind but its weaknesses. *These* are the real class-conscious people. From the first they have backed Mussolini and Hitler.

THE IDEA that Hitler was taking a chance, or being courageous when he entered the Rhineland, or when he tore up the military clauses of the Versailles Treaty, or when he bludgeoned Austria, is nonsense. He had an understanding in advance from ruling-class England on all these measures.

A RECENT SURVEY showed that over 95 percent of public offices in the British government are held by graduates of what are called the "public" schools. These are, of course, the great private schools (Eton, Harrow, Westminster, etc.) which make such a point of the "old school tie." They dominate the cabinet, the courts, the diplomatic service, the civil service, the church, the foreign office, the colonial and dominion departments. It was the proud boast of the British that even when Labor was in power, the civil service went on as usual, which is true. It did. Put very bluntly, England is a political democracy in which the wealthy and aristocratic classes control the government. Hitler has done the world one favor: he has shown who actually exercises the governing power in Great Britain.

THE REAL STATE OF AFFAIRS in England was revealed for all time during the Ulster re-

bellion of 1913. Parliament passed laws in regard to Ireland. This was the voice of England speaking, with all the power of the empire behind it. But Ulster refused to obey the laws, formed its own army, and defied the government. This action was backed by the English Conservatives. Officers of British regiments sent to put down the Ulster rebellion refused to obey orders. It was mutiny and treason. But nobody was ever punished. Mutiny is only mutiny when the lower classes use it. Anyone who believes that the ruling-class English would allow democracy to stand in their way in a crisis is forgetting Ulster. Anyone who thinks fascism is impossible in England is a fool.

YOU WILL RECALL that in 1914 an ultimatum was handed to Serbia. By a coincidence, that ultimatum came from Austria-Hungary. Exactly as in the case of the recent German-Austrian ultimatum, acceptance meant the loss of sovereignty for the victim. Europe was shocked at the brutality of Austria-Hungary. The people of England were shocked, but the ruling powers were not shocked. They were busy behind the scenes trying to make a deal. The deal would have allowed the Austrian army to occupy Belgrade as an indication of Serbia's "good faith."

THERE is not an ounce of morals in the British foreign policy. There never has been. It is amazing to me that the world should continue to be taken in by the British.

DOES ANYBODY but Chamberlain believe that Mussolini intends to withdraw his troops from Spain? Does Chamberlain believe it!

THEY ARE GOING to send a commission in to investigate.

ONE WOULD THINK that an English gentleman like Chamberlain who knew that Count Grandi had a message from Mussolini would have insisted on hearing the message before allowing Eden to resign. The message contained the very assurances Eden had previously insisted on, but he didn't see the message.

IT WAS perhaps just as well. Mussolini will carry out just as much of it as pleases him.

CAN IT BE that British gentlemen are not honorable?

LISTEN.

LLOYD GEORGE won the election after the war on the cry of "Hang the Kaiser." That was a fake.

THE FIRST Labor government was overthrown because of the so-called Zinoviev letter which purported to be a call from Moscow to the Labor Party for armed revolution. That was a forgery and a fake.

THE REACTIONARIES overthrew the second Labor government with the slogan: "Defend the Gold Standard." That was a fake. A month after they were in office, they threw out the gold standard.

THE LAST ELECTION was won on the cry of "Defend the League of Nations . . . Sanctions . . . Help for Ethiopia." The voters had barely got away from the polls when Sir Samuel Hoare was forming his infamous deal with Laval to divide Ethiopia. The League of Nations is now entirely jettisoned.

HAVE YOU any notion that Mussolini will withdraw his troops from Spain?

DON'T BE TOO POSITIVE that the British have been blackmailed by Hitler and Mussolini. There is a large body of opinion in England, headed by the Astors (the London *Times*) and Lord Rothermere (the Northcliffe interests) and Lord Beaverbrook, which has been profascist from the beginning. They love being blackmailed in a holy cause.

WILL LONDON BANKERS grant Hitler and Mussolini loans? Three guesses.

DO YOU REMEMBER the Stresa conference which was to guarantee the independence of Austria? Do you recall that while it was going on the British, behind the backs of their allies, the French, were negotiating a naval treaty with Germany?

DO YOU REMEMBER the conquest of Manchuria by Japan and the scenes in the League of Nations when Sir John Simon, instead of backing the protests of the United States, made a case for Japan, which was so complete that the Japanese delegate left without speaking, saying he couldn't possibly do as much for Japan as Sir John?

How would you like being a Czechoslovakian?

WHEN ANTHONY EDEN contends that Mussolini hasn't kept his agreements in the past, Neville Chamberlain retorts that Mussolini would have been unable to form future agreements with England because of his dislike of Anthony Eden. The New York *Daily News* will refer to this as realistic thinking.

ENGLAND'S advice to thugs: You may go through my garden to rob my neighbor provided you don't step on my flowerbeds.

THE mental wear and tear will be much less in England now that Hitler is picking the cabinet.

HEIL BRITANNIA!

ROBERT FORSYTHE.